

Attachment A

<p>Draft Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021-2025</p>
--



Action Plan
May 2021

Draft Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021–2025

Photography Credits:

Page 9: Chris Southwood

Page 7 and 21: Joseph Mayers

Page 6, 20 and 48: Mark Metcalfe

Page 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 26,

34, 35, 37, 39, 43, 44, 46 and 49: Katherine Griffiths

Page 1, 17, 29, 31 and 32: Adam Hollingworth

Page 1, 21 and 30: Jamie Williams

Page 1, 22 and 27: Damian Shaw

Page 23: Jessica Lindsay

Page 33: Matthew Venables

Page 38: Sharon Hickey

Page 1, 42 and 45: Gary Radler

Contents

04	Lord Mayor's Message
05	Message from the CEO
06	Acknowledgments
08	Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel
10	Summary
12	The case for inclusion
13	Policy and legislative context
18	Community profile
24	Disability in Australia
26	Developing this plan
29	Direction 1: Positive community attitudes and behaviours
34	Direction 2: Liveable communities
41	Direction 3: Meaningful employment
47	Direction 4: Equitable access to mainstream services
50	Action: Direction 1
52	Action: Direction 2
62	Action: Direction 3
66	Action: Direction 3
70	Implementation and governance
71	Measuring success
74	Endnotes

Lord Mayor's Message



The City of Sydney's ongoing commitment to making Sydney truly inclusive and welcoming is embodied in our fifth Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan.

This plan aligns the long-term vision of an inclusive City of Sydney and the City of Sydney's Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan- A City for All that recognises human rights at its core.

The Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan recognises the underlying social responsibility for local governments to work to remove barriers to inclusive participation in our communities, protect the rights of people with disability and promote the value of diversity and inclusion across the community, and create a better future for everyone.

The plan sets out practical ways we can continue to create a more inclusive city. Inclusive cities are easy to get around, they provide people with disability opportunities for participation in the diverse social, cultural life of the city and access to meaningful employment opportunities. An inclusive city benefits everyone – not just people with disability.

Over the last four years we have continued to work on the priorities identified by our communities.

We focused on addressing physical barriers in our built environment to ensure that everyone is able to access our streets, parks, playgrounds and open spaces. We upgraded footpaths, built new access ramps, installed braille and tactical signage and opened the new inclusive and accessible Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre.

Our Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines will ensure that we continue to design, build and maintain a public domain that is inclusive and accessible for all.

We have also worked to improve access for people with disability to City of Sydney information, services, programs and events. This plan will continue to strengthen these processes.

Community expectation levels have continued to grow against the backdrop of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the current Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. We must continually review and change the way we do business to advance the inclusion of people with disability. This action plan is about strengthening our practices and broadening our understanding of disability to ensure that the inclusion of people with disability is embedded in everything that we do.

Under this plan, we will also work to address the lack of understanding faced by people with less visible disabilities and implement strategies to ensure our services, programs and events are inclusive for people with invisible disabilities.

I am proud of the diverse communities who live in the City of Sydney area. We work to make sure all people are welcome, regardless of their traditions, religious and spiritual practices, languages, abilities, sexual orientation or lifestyle.

Clover Moore
Lord Mayor

Message from the CEO



We value the contributions made by all people and believe that this diversity strengthens our city. We respect people's right to self-determination and we strive for inclusion.

We are proud of the work we have done so far to improve how we design and manage public spaces with accessibility in mind, and to create more opportunities for inclusive participation in the City's programs and more equitable access to City services.

In 2012, we recognised that as an organisation we cannot work towards inclusion of people with disability without involving people with disability in our journey.

In 2012, Council endorsed the establishment of the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel. The Panel's strategic advice, and diverse lived experiences of disability, have been instrumental in our journey to inclusion so far.

In 2020, the Panel worked with the City to develop the following statement of inclusion.

The City of Sydney acknowledges and recognises that the voice and contribution of people and communities with diverse lived experience of disability, both past and present, are essential in realising an inclusive society.

The statement reminds us that true inclusion cannot be achieved without the voice and participation of people with disability.

In that spirit, as we developed this plan, and as we plan for Sydney in 2050, we want people with disability, people with lived experiences of mental health conditions and carers to help shape the city.

Through our consultation to develop this plan, we heard that access to meaningful employment remains one of the most significant barriers faced by people with disability.

We recognise that we must now focus our efforts to increasing access to meaningful employment at the City.

Our aim is to have a workforce that reflects and represents the diversity in our community, so that we can better meet the needs of our community.

We also recognise that workplaces that are diverse and inclusive perform better and are more innovative. Inclusive workplaces allow staff of diverse backgrounds to bring their best selves to work every day, enhancing collaboration, engagement and workplace wellbeing.

We are investing in upskilling our people to recruit and retain diverse employees and develop a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Congratulations and thank you to the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel and City staff for their work so far and for championing inclusion of everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. M. Barone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Monica Barone
CEO

Acknowledgments

The Council of the City of Sydney acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of our land – Australia. The City acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of this place we now call Sydney.

In 1788, the British established a convict outpost on the shores of Sydney Harbour. This had far reaching and devastating impacts on the Eora Nation, including the occupation and appropriation of their traditional lands.

Today, Sydney is of prime importance as the first place in which longstanding ways of life were disrupted by invasion, as well as an ongoing centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, cultures, traditions and histories.

Despite the destructive impact of this invasion, Aboriginal culture endured and are now globally recognised as one of the world's oldest living cultures. Aboriginal peoples have shown, and continue to show, enormous resilience coupled with generosity of spirit towards other peoples with whom they now share their land.

The Council of the City of Sydney recognises that, by acknowledging our shared past, we are laying the groundwork for a future which embraces all Australians, a future based on mutual respect and shared responsibility for our land. The ongoing custodianship of the Gadigal of the Eora Nation is an essential part of this future, as is Sydney's continuing place as centre of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities. There are many sites across our local government area with



Dialogue Forum at Customs House in Circular Quay as part of Sustainable Sydney 2050 consultations.

historical and cultural significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The City has documented many of these in Barani / Barrabagu (Yesterday / Tomorrow) as its first expression of the Eora Journey project.

The City works with, and has achieved much with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel, consistent with the Principles of Cooperation signed between the City of Sydney and the Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council in 2006. The City is deeply committed to Reconciliation in partnership with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and in 2020 adopted our second Reconciliation Action Plan. In 2016, the Eora Journey Economic Development Plan was adopted. These actions and others will help to

ensure their political, economic, social and cultural rights are embedded in subsequent economic, social, environmental and cultural change.

Sustainable Sydney 2030 recognises Sydney's Aboriginal heritage and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the City were extensively consulted for Sustainable Sydney 2030 and this consultation continues today. The City of Sydney is committed to acknowledging, sharing and celebrating a living culture in the heart of our city.



NAIDOC in the City 2019.

Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel

The Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel provides strategic, expert and impartial advice on the development, implementation, and review of the City of Sydney's policies, strategies and plans to advance the inclusion of people with disability.

The panel of 10 community members bring a diverse range of expertise. The panel members provide independent and external advice to:

- review our policies and plans, and provide advice to Council across all areas relevant to people with disability
- enhance inclusion and accessibility of the City's infrastructure, facilities, events, services, programs, systems and information for people with disability
- advise the City on its relevant submissions relating to state and federal government policy and legislation
- provide advice to Council on how to identify issues that are relevant to people with disability.

The panel was instrumental in the design and development of this action plan and will continue to play a critical role in monitoring and providing advice for the plan's implementation.



Judy Harwood



Julie Millard



Morwenna Collett



Mark Tonga



Max Burt



Nidhi Shekaran



Dr Phillipa Carnemolla



Sabrina Houssami



Tara Elliffe

Summary

The City of Sydney's ongoing commitment to making Sydney truly inclusive and welcoming is embodied in our fifth Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan.

This plan aligns the City's long-term vision of an inclusive City of Sydney and meets the legislative requirements from the Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

This plan includes a series of actions designed to actively address barriers faced by people with disability. They build on the success of previous plans, and harness new and emerging opportunities.

The plan has been developed through consultation with people with disability, people with lived experiences of mental health conditions and people with caring responsibilities, local disability service providers, peak disability representative and advocacy organisations and the City of Sydney Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.

Understanding disability

Almost one in five Australians live with a disability, increasing to more than one in two Australians by the age of 65. Additionally, one in four Australians will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime. In NSW approximately 11 per cent of residents identify as being a carer for someone with disability, chronic illness or mental health condition.

What these statistics reveal is that disability is part of the human experience; that if a person does not have disability now, chances are that at some point in their lives they will experience some form of disability either personally or as a carer.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 reflects this understanding of disability. The Act defines disability as including:

"A long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, that in interaction with various barriers, may hinder [a] person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

In the context of planning for mainstream services and infrastructure that local government is responsible for, the City of Sydney uses a social model of disability.

Under this model, disability is understood as a product of the barriers that communities allow to remain in place. In the local government context such barriers may be:

- physical – such as inaccessible facilities, streetscapes, or parks and open spaces; or
- social – such as a lack of information in accessible formats or systems that create barriers, often unintended, for people with disability to participate in community life; or
- attitudinal – such as assumptions that people with disability cannot participate in certain activities or perform certain jobs.

When these barriers are removed, the majority of people with disability will experience greater independence and dignity, and equitable opportunities for social and economic inclusion.



Drawing workshop held in Zetland.

The City of Sydney recognises there is an underlying social responsibility to remove barriers from the mainstream services it provides, the employment opportunities it provides to the community and the infrastructure and public spaces it manages.

We also recognise our role in both protecting and promoting the rights of people with disability and in promoting the value of diversity and inclusion across the community.

- continuous improvement in relation to inclusion and access for people with disability
- achieving outcomes for people with disability and /or caring responsibilities in line with our social sustainability policy and action plan, A City for All.

Role of this plan

This Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan will set the framework and priorities for:

- meeting the City's responsibilities under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Commonwealth Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- identifying barriers to inclusion, and developing strategies and actions that will respond to and address those barriers

Four key directions

This action plan focuses on four key directions:

- develop **positive community attitudes and behaviours** towards people with disability through community awareness and education
- create more **liveable communities** for people with disability through improving the environment and supports
- achieve a higher rate of **meaningful employment** participation by people with disability through inclusive employment practices and education
- provide more **equitable access to mainstream services** for people with disability through better systems and processes, and access to information.

The case for inclusion

Inclusion benefits everyone. As a community, we are stronger with a diverse range of viewpoints and perspectives, and as a whole we are enriched through activities that promote inclusion.

Inclusion reduces disadvantage, isolation and discrimination, it is the foundation of a connected and cohesive society.

Inclusion has far reaching positive impacts across all aspects of life, including health, wellbeing, education and employment. These impacts are felt beyond the individual, with families and the broader community all being enriched by an inclusive society. As a whole, we are more resilient when we are inclusive.

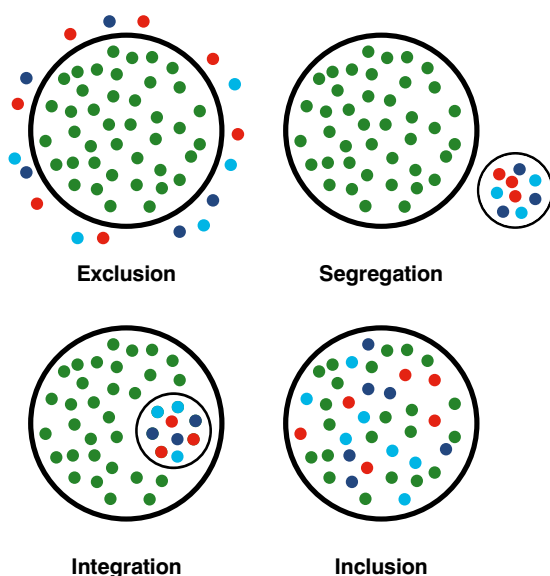
Inclusion is only possible when communities are inclusive for all people, including those with physical, intellectual, cognitive and sensory disability and people with lived experience of a mental health condition.

Around 90 per cent of City of Sydney residents responding to the 2018 community wellbeing survey agreed that 'it is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures and communities'.¹

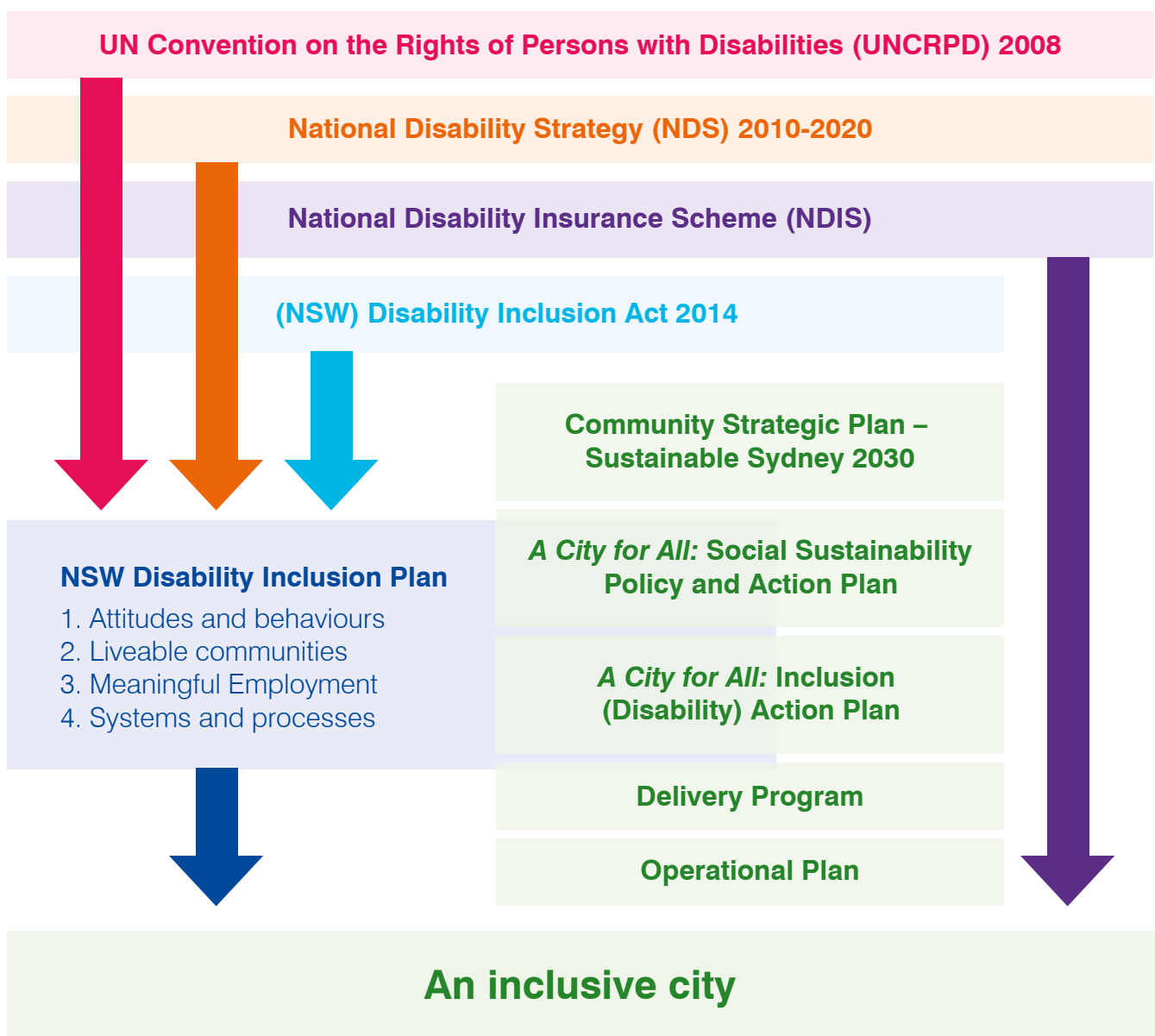
Inclusive communities benefit everyone by:

- promoting physical access to businesses benefits people with disability, and also older people, parents with prams and business owners by expanding their business reach
- improving opportunities for participation for people with disability in the local economy, with the potential to increase economic activity in the City of Sydney
- presenting through early planning and intervention, an opportunity for long-term savings to the community, reducing the need for retrospective action such as retrofits, especially in the built environment.

Universal design approaches that consider the needs of everyone are particularly important. These approaches consider a range of needs, including access needs of people with disability, and the needs of older people to age in place, as well as other groups who benefit from well designed and intuitive spaces and services. This is important given the city's ageing population, which will lead to an increase in the number of people with disability in the community.



Policy and legislative context



Policy Context

Since 1992, the (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 has made discrimination on the basis of disability unlawful.

In 2008, the Australian Government committed to implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including the obligation:

“to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”²

This signalled a commitment by all levels of government to eradicate barriers faced by people with disability and greater recognition of their human rights.

National Disability Strategy

This was followed in 2010 by the Australian National Disability Strategy, a 10-year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. The plan aims to ensure that the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into Australian policies and programs affecting people with disability, their families and carers.³

These commitments have driven a reform agenda designed to create a shift in attitudes across governments and communities to move beyond charity and take a rights-based response to the diverse needs of people with disability, to enable their participation in all aspects of society. The plan is also aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 10 that seeks to reduce inequality within and among countries.

The next National Disability Strategy is expected in late 2021. All levels of government have committed to continuing their efforts in implementing the principles of the current strategy until the new strategy is released. The Statement of Commitment⁴

Related legislation, standards and strategies

International

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008
- Commonwealth
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability (Access to Premises Standards
- Buildings) Standards 2010
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public
- Transport 2002
- Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987
- National Disability Strategy 2010–2020
- National Disability Insurance Scheme

New South Wales

- Anti-discrimination Act 1997
- Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Living Well in Focus 2020-2024: A strategic plan for community recovery, wellbeing and mental health in NSW
- Mental Health Act 2007
- NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

has been signed by relevant representatives from commonwealth, state and territory governments and the Australian National Local Government Association.⁴

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is national system of disability support focused on the individual needs and choices of people with disability, including people with psycho-social disability. The NDIS provides eligible people with tailored funding packages, and greater choice and control over how, when and where support is provided.



Ian Florek lives and works in the City with his Guide Dog Bryson.

Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Following the National Disability Strategy and foreshadowing the Implementation of the NDIS, the NSW Government introduced the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 which has these objectives:

- People with disability should have the same human rights as other members of the community and that governments and communities have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights.
- To promote the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with disability within the community.
- To provide people with disability safeguards in relation the delivery of their supports and services.

In 2019, the NSW Government review of the Act noted that the responsibility of the NSW Government to deliver specialist individual supports and services to people with disability has been taken over by the Commonwealth with full implementation of the NDIS.⁵

The review however emphasised that the NSW Government and local councils alike share a responsibility to ensure mainstream services are inclusive and accessible to people with disability.

In line with the requirements of the Act, all councils in NSW must develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. These plans must be reviewed every four years and be developed in consultation with people with disability. The role of local councils is particularly important to support greater participation by the 88 per cent of people with disability who don't receive NDIS funding.⁶

NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan provides a framework for the development and implementation of disability action plans across NSW Government agencies and local councils to drive disability inclusion and access in continued consultation and partnership with people with disability, key agencies and members of the community.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan sets out four key government objectives to work towards:

- the development of **positive community attitudes and behaviours** towards people with disability through community awareness and education;

- the creation of more **liveable communities** for people with disability through improving the environment and supports;
- the achievement of a higher rate of **meaningful employment** participation by people with disability through inclusive employment practices and education, and;
- more **equitable access to mainstream services for people** with disability through better systems and processes, and access to information.

City of Sydney context

Sustainable Sydney 2030

Sustainable Sydney 2030 is the City of Sydney's community strategic plan. First adopted in 2008, it expresses the community's vision and our commitment to the sustainable development of our city to 2030 and beyond.

It sets out our shared vision of inclusive economic growth, a cohesive community and a culturally alive and vibrant city – all within the agreed national and international policy settings of limiting global warming to less than two degrees, ideally 1.5 degrees.

Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a plan for a **green, global and connected** city:

- **Green** with a modest environmental impact, green with trees, parks, gardens and linked open spaces, green by example and green by reputation
- **Global** in economic orientation, global in links, partnerships and knowledge exchange, global and open-minded in outlook and attitude
- **Connected** physically by walking, cycling and high-quality public transport, connected 'virtually' by world-class telecommunications and as members of online networks, connected as communities through culture and a sense of belonging and social wellbeing, and connected to other spheres of government and to those with an interest in the city.

In 2018, Council resolved to review this vision, engaging the community in the development of a revised plan that extends to 2050. We expect our Council will consider the 2050 vision in mid-2021 and this will inform our new community strategic plan in 2022.



Green, global and connected at Rushcutters Bay Park.



Sensory Feelix Storytime brings stories to life through braille, tactile books, objects and craft for children.

Developing our Sustainable Sydney 2050 vision

The comprehensive engagement program that informed the development of Sustainable.

Sydney 2050 was done in line with our community engagement principles. It reached a wide range of community members including residents, workers, business owners and visitors and across age ranges.

The program ran from November 2018 to December 2019. It included more than 100 individual activities such as community events, targeted sector events, roundtables, an online survey, and children's and youth summits. We also worked with New Democracy to convene a citizen's jury comprised of 47 randomly selected citizens who deliberated over six weekends to make recommendations on what concepts should be implemented in Sydney by 2050.

The City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel was briefed and provided the advice on how to ensure the consultation opportunities were inclusive and accessible for people with disability. Panel members were also invited to participate in a workshop with members from the City's other advisory panels.

Proposed additions to Sustainable Sydney 2050

From our research and community engagement, it is proposed to include a new strategic direction – an equitable and inclusive city.

This will make more explicit the outcomes we are working towards as an organisation and

as a community. The Sustainable Sydney 2050 vision will include a set of principles that reflect the values of our community and help guide the City's decision making. These principles will ensure that everyone feels connected, is an active member of our community and has the opportunity to influence decision making.

A City for All: Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2018-2028

The City of Sydney's social sustainability policy and action plan, A City for All, outlines our vision for a just and inclusive city, and a socially sustainable Sydney. The City has identified four strategic directions for a socially just and resilient Sydney, which form the basis of the action plan:

- an **inclusive** city: affordability and opportunity
- a **connected** city: diverse, cohesive communities
- a **liveable** city: quality places and spaces
- an **engaged** city: good governance and active participation

The Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan articulates the outcomes for people with disability in line with Sydney 2030, A City for All, our social sustainability policy and action plan, and the directions of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan.

The City of Sydney will play a strong role in implementing the principles of the plan at the local level. Our plan also complements the National Disability Insurance Scheme and provides the framework for how we intend to address local barriers to full participation by people with disability in the community.

Community profile

The City of Sydney is a vibrant Local Government Area, made up of diverse community groups spread across 26.15 km². As one of Australia's leading global cities, the City is unique and demands consideration of how we treat residents, workers and visitors.

In 2019, there were close to 250,000 people living within the City's boundaries,⁷ with the population predicted to reach 350,000 people by 2040.⁸ In addition, over 500,000 people work,⁹ and an estimated 670,000 visit the City area each day to study, shop, or for business, entertainment or tourism purposes.¹⁰ A total of 16 million domestic and international visitors stayed overnight in metropolitan Sydney area in the year to March 2020.¹¹

What these statistics reveal is that disability is part of the human experience; that if a person does not have disability now, chances are that at some point in their lives they will experience some form of disability, a lived experience of a mental health condition or be a carer.



City community centres come together to host Community's Got Talent.



Time out in Moore Park.

People with disability

Disability may be acquired at birth or early in life, or may be the result of accident, illness or injury throughout life. Disability rates increase substantially as people age, with 50 per cent of people over the age of 65 living with some form of disability.¹²

In Australia, approximately 18 per cent of the population, or more than 4.4 million people, live with one or more disabilities. In NSW in 2018 there were over 1.3 million people with disability, of whom about 430,000 reported needing help with day-to-day activities including self-care, mobility and communication, that is, they had a profound or severe disability.¹³

With a mostly young resident base, six per cent of residents of the City of Sydney area identified as a person with a disability in 2018.¹⁴ According to 2016 Census, about 5,100, or close to three per cent have a severe or profound disability that affects their ability to communicate, get around and care for themselves.¹⁵ There are also many people with disability who visit and work in the City of Sydney. The City wants to create an inclusive and accessible city for everyone.

People with less visible disabilities

When talking to people with disability, people with mental health conditions and carers about what should be in this plan, they told us that community attitudes towards people with visible disabilities had improved over time.

Many of those we spoke to pointed out that there was still a lack of awareness and understanding of less visible disabilities including: people living with mental health conditions, people on the Autism spectrum and people with an intellectual disability.

People living with mental health conditions

There are many different types of mental health conditions and varying levels of impact. Some of the major types include: depression, anxiety, bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia, and complex trauma. Every person's experience is different. Some people experience a mental health condition once in their lifetime, others have episodic or recurrent experiences of mental health issues.

People living with mental health conditions may also live with psychosocial difficulties exacerbated by historical and current trauma, poverty, poor physical health, stigma and discrimination which often feature as part of everyday experiences.¹⁶ In addition, their families, friends and carers may experience difficulties with their own mental health.



Waterloo Estate Community Garden promotes health and wellbeing.

One in five (20 per cent) or 4.8 million Australians and nearly 1.5 million NSW residents (19 per cent) had a current and long-term mental health condition in 2017–18, nearly double the rate recorded in 2007–08 (11 per cent).¹⁷ 22 per cent of City of Sydney residents reported 'poor' or 'fair' mental health outcomes in 2018, up from 14 per cent in 2015. The proportion was much higher among people who identified as a person with disability with 52 per cent rating their mental health as 'poor' or 'fair'.¹⁸

The Covid-19 pandemic has delivered countless challenges and had a profound impact on individuals, families and communities, with increased periods of isolation, anxiety and depression and financial stress. To have a truly inclusive community, the needs of people with a lived experience of a mental health condition must also be considered.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is a concept originally developed by Australian sociologist, Judy Singer, that acknowledges that no two people think exactly the same and that we exist in a neurodiverse population.¹⁹

Today, neurodiversity is used more broadly as a term to explain diverse neurological conditions experienced by some people with disability. Neurodiversity is a strengths-based approach that highlights that some people think differently because of the way their brain works, and that this diversity is a good thing for society.

People that might call themselves neurodivergent include people with: Autism, dyslexia, dyscalculia, epilepsy, hyperlexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and Tourette syndrome.²⁰

Within this approach people may be neurodivergent as opposed to neurotypical.

People on the Autism Spectrum

Autism is a condition that affects how a person thinks, feels, interacts with others, and experiences their environment.²¹ People with Autism can be impacted by difficulties in social interaction, communication, restricted and repetitive interests and behaviours, and sensory sensitivities.²²

In 2018 there were 205,000 Australians with Autism, this is a 25 per cent increase from 2015. 106,600 are aged between five to 20 years.²³

People on the Autism spectrum face even greater challenges participating in the workforce. The unemployment rate for people with Autism was 34.1 per cent, three times the rate of people with disability (10.3 per cent) and almost eight times the rate of people without disability (4.6 per cent).²⁴ The labour force participation rate for people on the Autism spectrum was 38 per cent compared to 53.4 per cent of all working age people with disability and 84.1 per cent of people without disability.²⁵



Yabun Festival celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia.

First Nations people with disability

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to experience disability than the rest of the population, with rates of disability about 2.5 times that of non-Indigenous people (45 per cent have one or more disabilities; eight per cent need help with day-to-day activities).²⁶

It's important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have access to an Aboriginal community controlled service sector that is able to deliver culturally appropriate services, programs and information. These supports should recognise and value the existing knowledge, skills and expertise within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.²⁷

The Deaf community

The Deaf community has a shared language and culture and a long tradition of common experience. Members of this community are mostly those people who were born deaf or became deaf early in life. Members may also include hearing friends, family members and those who work with Deaf people, such as interpreters and community workers. What particularly links individuals and groups and makes them a distinct community is their shared use of Auslan (Australian Sign Language).



Auslan Poetry Slam audience applauds.



Lord Mayors' Picnic held at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney on New Year's Eve.

People with disability from diverse backgrounds

The City has a large culturally and linguistically diverse population.

Over half of our residents are born overseas and 41 per cent speak a language other than English at home. This is reflected in the number of people living with disabilities – over 2,100 (or 42 per cent) of the City area residents who need assistance with core activities speak a language other than English at home.²⁸



A group of older Asian women are performing Tai Chi with arms stretched out in a community square.

Carers

Carers play a vital role in the wider community. A carer is a person of any age “who provides ongoing personal care, support and assistance to any other individual who needs it because that other individual:

- is a person with disability
- has a medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness)
- has a mental health condition
- is frail and aged.

This assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing, for at least 6 months.

In 2018, around one in nine (11 per cent) Australians provided unpaid care to people with disability and older Australians. In New South Wales in 2018 there were 854,000 carers.²⁹ In the City of Sydney area, seven per cent of 15+ year old residents – the equivalent of 11,800 people – identified as a carer in 2016.³⁰ Inclusive communities and workplaces support carers and value their vital contribution to the community.

Underground at Green Square Library - An outlandish night of live music, interactive art and retro video games.



Disability in Australia

4.4 MILLION

(18%) of all
Australians are
people with disability.



Almost half (44.5%) of all
people with disability aged

65+

23.2%

Almost one quarter
live with a **mental
health condition**.

6.5%

live with an **intellectual
or developmental
disability**.

People with disability are

more than twice as likely
to **not have a job**

(10.3%) than people without disability (4.6%).

Disability and carers in NSW

1.3 MILLION

(17%) of all NSW residents are
people with disability.

47%

Almost half are over
the age of 65.

1 IN 3



of all NSW residents with
disability (0.5 million, or 6%
of all NSW residents) have
a **profound or severe
disability**, which impacts
their mobility, ability to
communicate and self care.

5%

of 15+ year olds with disability
live in social or public housing.



4 TIMES

higher than among those
with no disability (1%).

Labour force participation rate
for 15-64 year old people

People with disability

51%

People without disability

82%

Disability and carers in NSW (continued)

33% of people 15 years and over with disability

avoided common situations because of their disability in the previous year.
Most often visiting:



Family and friends



Shops and banks



Restaurants, cafes, bars

10%

of people 15 years and over with disability



up from 8.6% in 2015

had experienced discrimination

in the previous 12 months because of their disability.



1 IN 9

NSW residents (0.9 million) aged 15 or over **provide unpaid care** to someone in their household.

Disability & carers in the **City of Sydney**



5,100

City of Sydney residents (3%) needed assistance with core activities in 2016 due to **profound or severe disability**



11,800

aged 15 or over provided **unpaid assistance (7%)**

for someone with a disability, long term health condition or old age.

35%



Residents with profound or severe disability are

7 times more likely to live in social housing

5%

than other people.

Source: City of Sydney estimates based on ABS Census of Population and Housing (2016). ABS, Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, 2018 (Cat. No. 4430.0). City of Sydney estimates based on ABS Census of Population and Housing (2016).

Developing this plan

Review

The process to develop this plan began with a review of progress made on the previous Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2017–2021.

In the following sections we outline the key achievements over the last four years for each of our four strategic directions.

Overall, our review found that over the past seven to eight years, the City's focus has been to understand and meet the needs of people with physical disabilities and sensory disabilities, including: people with mobility disabilities, people who are blind or have low vision, the Deaf community and people who are hard of hearing.

The City identified an opportunity to expand our focus to better understand and meet the needs of people with intellectual disability and people with Autism.

Consulting people with disability

After the review we consulted people with disability about what the City should do next.

Between August and October 2020, we asked people with disability for feedback on how we can create a more inclusive city.

The City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel provided advice and guidance on the consultation and engagement process to ensure our approach to was inclusive. The consultation included the following activities:

- Three **online workshops** attended by 41 community members and people working in the disability sector, including:
 - 27 people identifying as a person with a disability
 - Five identifying as a carer
 - Seven people representing local disability service providers and disability peak groups.



A woman speaks in Auslan to a group.



Consultation with people on Sydney 2050.

- Four targeted workshops attended by 16 people with **Autism and people with intellectual disability**, including parent-carers.

The workshops were facilitated by Autism Spectrum Australia and the Council for Intellectual Disability, who recruited participants, and assisted the City to design and deliver an inclusive engagement experience for people on Autism Spectrum and people with intellectual disability.

- An **online survey** was open to all community members from 31 August to 6 October 2020. 164 people completed the survey, and of these people:
 - 55 per cent identified as a person with disability
 - 40 per cent identified as a carer
 - 32 per cent identified as a person with a mental health condition.

Community members were also invited to provide feedback by email, in writing or on the phone to a dedicated council officer.

Both the workshops and survey were promoted to the wider community via social media, radio and local news publications, and directly people who had contacted the city about access and inclusion matters, local disability service providers and a broad range of disability advocacy and peak groups, including groups representing the interests of carers and people with lived experience of a mental health condition.

What stakeholders told us

People noted the significant improvements made to the physical environment to improve access for people with disability, but there are still many barriers to access in public spaces including:

- uneven and inaccessible footpaths
- lack of parking or places to drop people with disability in the central business district
- quiet places or places for respite and sensory seeking behaviours.

People told us that there were more inclusive and accessible events and programs on offer but these were not always promoted effectively to people with disability, so they didn't know they existed.

The Covid-19 pandemic created some positive impacts for people with disability. More online programs made it easier for people to participate in various community and learning activities, and the shift to working flexibly and from home provided people with disability more employment opportunities.

People told us that the City should learn from this experience and look to build on these opportunities to ensure greater rates of participation from people with disability at City programs and in the workforce.

People with disability commented that there has been an increase in disability awareness within the community. There is however room for improvement when it comes to people with less visible disabilities including people living with mental health conditions.

A more detailed summary of the comments and suggestions made by people with disability is included in the following sections for each of our four strategic directions.

How the consultation has informed this plan

The ideas put forward during the consultation were assessed and refined into key actions across the four directions.

Those actions where the City has direct control or influence to achieve outcomes were prioritised for inclusion in this plan.

The plan includes some new actions which address emerging issues identified by the community, whereas others are existing actions from the previous plan which have been updated and carried forward to reflect the next stage in implementation.

Commitment to ongoing engagement

The City is committed to engaging with people with disability within our community and our workforce with broad issues and interests.

The City will:

- Continue to consult with the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel on key issues
- Continue to provide inclusive and accessible community engagement activities.
- Engage with disability peak and advocacy groups and services on a range of access and inclusion initiatives and issues
- Continue to engage with employees with disability and caring responsibilities to better understand their needs and perspectives.

People with disability can provide feedback and suggestions over the life of the plan in the following ways:

- Provide your feedback or suggestion to council 02 9265 9333 or council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
- Provide your feedback or suggestion about the progress on the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan to by email inclusiondisability@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au or by phone on 02 9265 9333
- Contact us through the National Relay Service relayservice.gov.au/support/training/nrs-call-numbers. Give the City of Sydney's number 02 9265 9333.

Direction 1: Positive community attitudes and behaviours

Context

The City's ongoing engagement with people with disability has revealed that attitudes towards them are influenced by lack of community education, awareness and limited opportunities for interaction.

One in 10 NSW residents living with disability experience discrimination, often by various service providers, retail and hospitality staff, but also by their colleagues, strangers in the street, as well as by family and friends.³¹

Negative attitudes towards people with disability have significant impacts on people's life in the areas of education, employment, health, and community participation.

While it is important to identify specific actions to assist in the development of positive attitudes and behaviours, we know that actions under the other three strategic directions will also contribute to developing inclusive attitudes.



Green Square Library designed for all.

What we have done so far

The City continues to provide a program of disability inclusion training to build staff competency in disability inclusion topics. Key components include:

- A new inclusion (disability) training module which is mandatory for all new starters. This training gives staff a foundational level of understanding and competency. The module covers relevant legislation, appropriate language and a series of scenarios to provide staff with an understanding of the diversity of disability.
- A program of specialist training that builds capacity and skill within our workforce to meet our obligations to provide accessible and inclusive services and built environment.
- Access to a range of mental health related training to provide employees with the skills to manage their work and life demands in a way that supporter their mental health and the health of others.

The City has contributed to more positive community attitudes toward people with disability through the following:

- Use of the City's mainstream media channels, publications, events and sponsorship opportunities to promote inclusion of people with disability.
- The City sponsored the Invictus Games in 2018 and the Australian Paralympic Team in 2020. The media coverage associated with these sponsorships helps to reinforce positive attitudes towards people with disability.
- Community programming aimed at fostering positive community attitudes towards people with disability and people a lived experience of a mental health condition.



Auslan Poetry Slam at Green Square Library featuring Todd Wright.

Case study – Auslan Poetry Slam

In November 2019 the City hosted an Auslan Slam Poetry workshop and an Auslan Slam performance event.

The performance night featured four high profile Auslan performance artists and five audience members trying out their stuff during the “open hands” section of the night.

After the MC set the scene with the Deaf acknowledgment, a 94 strong audience were swept away by captivating, suspenseful, moving and hilarious performances. From climate change, to birthdays, to parenthood, to Shakespeare’s Queen Mab, the audience was treated to an amazing range of Deaf arts.

Of the attendees, 95 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that it inspired their own creativity, 100 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcome and included.

Audience feedback suggests there is an audience out there hungry for more of this kind of programming.

“Brilliant. More please.”

“This is so beneficial for the Deaf community, to promulgate and develop a rich appreciation of Auslan Slam Poetry. Frequent events would be most appreciated in order to see this rich craft flourish. Amazing performers and outstanding venue. Much appreciated.”

“Please have more Auslan events! It was great and our community is so hungry for performance space in Sydney but too often space is too expensive to hire so this made a big difference and lifted spirits!”

Related strategies

A City for All: Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2018–2028

What you told us

We surveyed people with disability, mental health conditions and carers and asked them how they would rate current attitudes towards the people with disability, mental health conditions in the community.

Most people surveyed (73 per cent) said there are either very negative or negative attitudes in the community towards people with mental health conditions.

Negative attitudes towards people with disability were less common. Only 35 per cent of people surveyed reported that there were very negative or negative attitudes towards people with disability. However just over half of people with disability surveyed (51 per cent) said that there are neutral (sometime negative, sometimes positive) attitudes in the community towards people with disability.

This suggests that while there has been an increase in positive attitudes and awareness towards people with disability generally, stigma towards people with mental health conditions remains.

People in the workshops told us that this increase in awareness seems to be limited to people with physical disabilities and there is a real need to improve awareness and understanding of people with invisible disabilities such as Autism, intellectual disability, chronic health conditions and mental health conditions.

They also told us that barriers in the built environment can reinforce segregation and limit opportunities for interaction between people without disability and people with disability.

They explained that increased interaction and participation, and better representation of people with disability in media and publications will contribute to greater levels of acceptance and understanding.

Some of their ideas include:

- Provide better representation of people with disability in City media, communications and publications, not just those related to disability.
- Promote everyday stories of people with disability through social media to reduce stigma and raise awareness.



Auslan Storytime for pre-school age children.



Darling Square Library Ideas Lab.

What we will do next

1. Continue to deliver a program of inclusion training to all staff to ensure that staff are capable and competent to support customers, colleagues and their staff with disability and mental health conditions.

Provide specialist disability training to upskill key staff across the organisation. Key areas of focus include: inclusive and accessible communications, inclusive built environments, accessible and inclusive service delivery.

2. Provide programs that foster positive community attitudes towards people with disability, in particular, people with less visible disabilities.
3. Increase images of people with disability in City publications, digital platforms and media channels.



Lunar New Year Lantern 2020 –
Guide Dog Lantern

Direction 2: Liveable communities

Liveable communities are places in which people have the opportunity to live, learn, work and play, to feel safe, to belong, to raise a family and to grow old.

The City has a role to play to ensure that everyone, including people with disability, has the opportunity to:

- access our streets, parks, playgrounds and open spaces
- participate in events and cultural programs
- access and participate in sport and recreation
- access retail, hospitality and leisure services
- access appropriate and affordable housing.

It's important to note that not all of these areas will be addressed in this plan and are reflected as priorities in other City strategies.

The City is not solely responsible for addressing issues across all of these areas and will need to collaborate with other organisations and levels of government.

Context

The City of Sydney aims to connect residents, workers visitors and tourists with a rich and vibrant city life.

Unfortunately, there are still barriers that exist that prevent people with disability fully participating in city life. Every third person in NSW who lives with disability has avoided situations due to disability in the past year - most often visiting family, retail and hospitality venues, and other social situations.³²

Responding to our wellbeing survey, City of Sydney residents identifying as a person with disability mentioned difficulties accessing: venues (31 per cent), transport (20 per cent) and barriers to communication (16 per cent) more than twice as often as others when prompted for barriers limiting participation in the community and cultural activities in the past month. Similar to the rest of the community, cost of activities (60 per cent), shortage of suitable programs (44 per cent) and difficulty finding information (37 per cent) were issues for many.³³



Local residents want to live, learn, work and play.



City of Sydney Youth Week 2019 wrap party at Yurong Parkway Basketball Courts.

City streets, parks, playgrounds and open spaces

An inclusive and accessible public domain is the foundation of a liveable community. It is the critical link between accessible public transport, services, facilities and opportunities for social and economic inclusion.

Public places in cities should encourage people to come together; whether for aspects of their daily lives or for large events. These places are important for forming social connections.

The City is responsible for the design, maintenance and management of many public spaces within the City of Sydney local area. We therefore have a responsibility to ensure that these spaces are accessible and allow everyone equal opportunity to participate.

People with disability have reported that they still experience barriers in our public domain. In particular, people described difficulties with lack of accessible footpaths, navigation and wayfinding, access to appropriate parking and public transport and difficulty accessing lifts, public toilets and places to rest along their journey.

Events, cultural activities and tourism

Social, recreational and cultural activities are an important part of city life and it's therefore important that everyone, including people with disability are able to participate.

The City offers a diverse range of major events, community events and cultural programs. The event offer ranges from Sydney New Year's Eve, Lunar New Year and Art & About Sydney, to small-scale local community activities, and supports other events in the area.

These events often attract tourists from across the world. In the year ending March 2020, Sydney tourism region hosted 16 million overnight visitors from Australia and overseas, and 28 million people who made day trips into Sydney.³⁴

Approximately 6.8 per cent of international visitors have disability. Older people make up a significant proportion of the Sydney region visitors. In the year ending September 2020, 1.8 million (or 25 per cent) of the overnight visitors and 5.6 million (27 per cent of all) local domestic day visitors were aged 60 or older.³⁵ The City of Sydney recognises that people with disability, in particular older people, make up a significant proportion of our visitors.

Accessing business in the City

Sydney is Australia's premier retail destination, and Sydney's retail experience in the city centre is a key attribute of our global city status. The retail sector is also the foundation of our village main streets that attracts many visitors to the City of Sydney area.

There are more than 9,700 retail, hospitality and leisure sector businesses within the City area, making up 37 per cent of all local businesses in 2017.³⁶

People with disability told us that they still experience issues on a regular basis when trying to access retail, hospitality and leisure businesses.

Small improvements to shop fit out and layout and disability inclusion training can make a significant impact. However, we know that small retail and hospitality businesses need support, knowledge and resources to make these kinds of changes. The City can play a role in supporting small business to become more accessible and inclusive, and highlighting those that are leading the way.

Housing

A sustainable global city must offer a mix of housing to meet the needs of a diverse population.

The City must plan for the types of new homes residents will need in the future, the challenge is to support social and cultural diversity through increasing housing diversity and choice. This includes retaining and attracting residents with disability, people on lower incomes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families with children, older people, long-term renters, students, people living alone, shared households, and more. All these people should be able to find a suitable home in the city.

By 2036 it is expected that over 80 per cent of people living in the city will live in apartments.³⁷

As more people are living in higher density developments, greater focus is needed to facilitate greater diversity and choice of housing that is fit-for purpose and addresses the social and cultural needs of specific groups, including people with disability.

The City's Housing for All strategy recognises the need to increase the supply of accessible and adaptable housing in the inner city. With an ageing population and approximately 20 per cent

of the Australian population living with disability, the need for universally designed, accessible and adaptable housing in the city is expected to grow.

Accessible and adaptable housing enables people with disability and older people to live with independence and dignity, and age in place. Housing that is universally designed is more versatile and can better meet the changing needs of occupants, including families, over their lifetimes. The City requires larger-scale housing developments to incorporate adaptable dwellings and satisfy the NSW Apartment Design Guideline benchmark universal design features.

Related strategies

- A City for All: social sustainability policy and action plan 2018–2028
- Community Recovery Plan 2020–2021
- Creative City cultural policy and action plan
- Housing for All: City of Sydney local housing strategy
- Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines
- Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines
- Sydney City Centre Access Strategy
- Retail Action Plan 2013
- Walking strategy
- Wayfinding strategy



Virtual reality headsets allow people to explore the Great Barrier Reef at Customs House Library.

What we have done so far

Over the last few years the City has delivered on a number of actions which have contributed to a more liveable community for people with disability. Highlights include:

- The development of our inclusive and accessible public domain policy and guidelines.
- Development of the inclusive and accessible event guidelines. The guidelines outline minimum standards as well as some best practice considerations to encourage event producers to move beyond minimum compliance and demonstrate their commitment to inclusive events.
- The continued rollout of the City's pedestrian and access program. This program focuses on access upgrades and renewal projects to improve safety and accessibility across the City of Sydney area. The program includes upgrades to non-compliant ramps, footways and kerbs.
- Installation of braille and tactile signage at all signalised pedestrian crossings.
- Ongoing development and maintenance of the City's online access map which provides information about key access features such as: mobility parking spaces, accessible public toilets, key transport nodes and potential barriers such as stairs and steep inclines.
- Advocacy to other levels of government and regulators to encourage delivery of housing in the local area that is universally accessible for all people, including people with disability.



Inclusive bucket swing at Reconciliation Park, Redfern.

Case study – Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines

Every day, people with disability experience barriers that make it difficult to participate and work in the community. Barriers may be physical, such as inaccessible streetscapes; social, such as a lack of information about public spaces; or attitudinal, such as assumptions that people with disability are not able participate in certain activities in public spaces.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with disability in relation to access to, and use of, any premises, including the public domain - usually the responsibility of local government.

Designers and others often look to policy makers for practical advice on how to meet community expectations on disability access and inclusion. Until now, this was readily available for buildings from the Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 but not for public spaces or events.

The City has filled this gap with the inclusive and accessible public domain policy and guidelines, endorsed in October 2019. The policy and guidelines provide a framework for the consistent application of relevant Australian Access Standards and best practice approaches in the design, maintenance and management of public domain spaces and infrastructure.

The policy and guidelines apply to all new and upgraded public domain spaces and infrastructure, provided by the City of Sydney, or third parties such as contractors or developers as part of voluntary planning agreements.

The scope of the policy and guidelines were developed in consultation with the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel. They were informed by access audits conducted by consultants with diverse lived experiences of disability, and feedback from the community about access issues in public spaces.

The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines was announced as the winner of the 2020 Disability Access and Inclusion category of the 2020 National Awards for Local Government.

What you told us

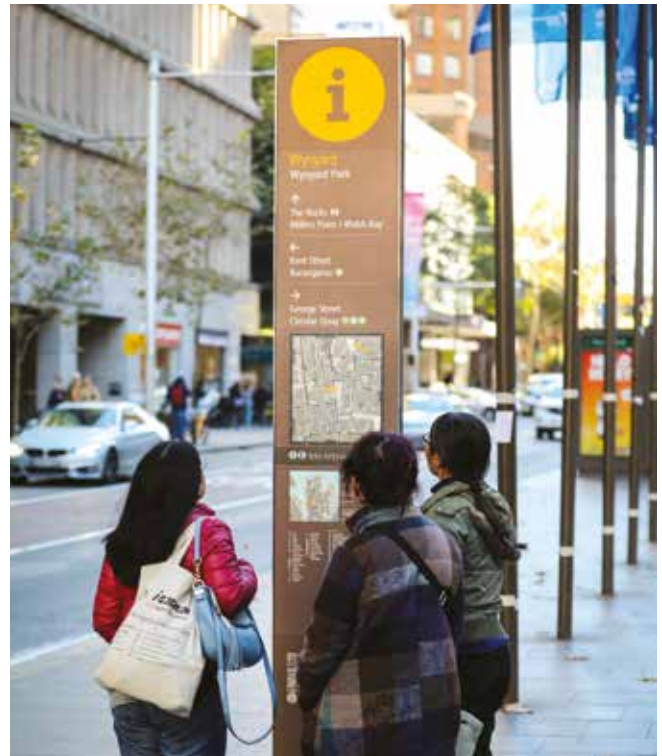
Barriers in the public domain

We asked people with disability, mental health conditions and carers how easy or difficult they find getting around our city and accessing public spaces.

People with disability told us that there remain significant barriers in getting around the City. Over half (54 per cent) of people surveyed told us they find it difficult or very difficult to move around our city, access public facilities and buildings, and access parks, streets and public spaces.

When asked how the City could improve access in the public domain people identified these priority issues:

- Improve accessibility of footpaths in the city. Remove trip hazards, ensure accessible non-slippery surfaces, appropriate kerb ramps or continuous footpath treatments to make it easier for people with mobility disabilities to get around independently.
- Assist people to navigate the city through better wayfinding and easy to read signage. Navigating the city was a key concern particularly in the central business district and was often a significant issue for people with intellectual disability and people on the Autism spectrum.
- Provide greater access to mobility parking or places where people can be dropped off. People with disability emphasised that not everyone is able to walk, cycle, or use public transport so priority access for private vehicles needs to be maintained for people with disability through well located mobility parking spaces and drop-off points, particularly in the central business district.
- Accessing businesses, particularly hospitality and retail, in the city remains a big barrier for people with disability. Many premises are not accessible, especially in smaller businesses on high streets. Low awareness and negative attitudes of staff and patrons in venues leads to people with disability being and feeling excluded.



Wayfinding map at Wynyard.

Other issues raised included: improved access to lifts particularly in areas where there are barriers such as steps or challenging topography, more seating for people who cannot walk long distances to rest and accessible public toilets, including a need for more adult change facilities in key locations.

Quiet spaces and places for respite

An emerging theme from our discussions with people with disability, people with mental health conditions and carers was that there was a need for quiet spaces and places for respite in the city, particularly in the central business district.

In the workshops, people with Autism told us that there is a lack of quiet spaces available to them in the city. These spaces are need to escape sensory overload from noises, smells and light. It's important that these places are safe so people with Autism feel comfortable to engage in "autistic behaviours". People often "mask" their autistic behaviours which can be very exhausting, therefore quiet spaces offer people the opportunity to rest.

Quiet spaces don't just benefit people with Autism but can provide respite for other neurodivergent people and people with mental health conditions.

These spaces could be provided in existing parks or within an existing built location.

Inclusive participation and events

When discussing participation at major, community and cultural events, people held mixed views and described a variety of experiences described by people with disability.

Key areas for improvement included:

- Improve staff attitudes and awareness, especially around Autism, intellectual disability and mental health conditions and other invisible disabilities.
 - Provide better quality information before the event about access. This is crucial for people with disability as it gives them greater confidence to attend knowing that they are welcome, and their access needs are met. Key suggestions include: maps, list of access features, easy-read information and a key contact.
 - Improvements to transport and parking. Explain how people with disability can get there, and plan for their needs. For major events, provide temporary set down points to allow people to be dropped in private vehicles/taxi's and promote where they are.
 - Make sure your events are held in accessible venues.
 - Provide more captioning or Auslan at events, not just for speeches.
 - Where possible, enable people with disability to book seats in designated access areas online.
 - Provide quiet spaces and sensory adjusted performances so people on the Autism spectrum can participate.
6. Review the current provision of seating and provide additional rest opportunities on streets and in outdoor spaces where appropriate.
 7. Advocate to other government agencies and land owners to provide additional adult change facilities in the City of Sydney area.
 8. Explore opportunities to provide designated quiet spaces, places for sensory seeking and places for respite in City of Sydney facilities, parks and playgrounds.
 9. Provide charging points for personal devices such as phones, electric bikes and mobility scooters in City of Sydney facilities.
 10. Continue to explore and implement strategies to increase access to on-street and off-street accessible parking and drop-off points in the City of Sydney area.
 11. Identify the most appropriate hearing augmentation systems to be used across the City of Sydney's facilities and venues where appropriate.
 12. Collaborate with local businesses and disability-led organisations to build their capacity to be more inclusive and accessible.
 13. Through the implementation of the City's Housing for All strategy investigate opportunities in the planning controls to increase the amount and improve the standard of housing that is universally designed.
 14. Continue to deliver a range of inclusive community, learning, sport and recreation programs and major events that ensure equitable access and participation for people with disability.
 15. Continue to provide programming that empowers people to manage their stressors and social and emotional wellbeing.
 16. Deliver and facilitate major events in line with the City's inclusive and accessible event guidelines.
 17. Continue to promote participation of artists with disability and audience members with disability in arts programs through the Creative City strategy.

What we will do next

4. Continue to improve the accessibility of streets, footpaths, parks and open places through renewal programs, upgrades and new capital projects in line with the inclusive and accessible public domain policy and guidelines.
5. Improve access to information about City of Sydney facilities and open spaces to assist people with disability, including people who are neurodivergent.

Direction 3: Meaningful employment

Context

People with disability and carers have valuable contributions to make to the community and workforce.

The City is committed to providing everyone equitable opportunities for employment and career progression, and to proactively addressing barriers to meaningful employment for people with disability and carers.

In 2020 1.4 per cent of staff within the City of Sydney's workforce identified as a person with disability.

City of Sydney People Strategy 2019–2021

The City is committed to a diverse and inclusive workplace that is free of discrimination. We recognise that workplaces that are diverse and inclusive perform better and are more innovative. Inclusive workplaces allow staff of diverse backgrounds to bring their best selves to work every day, enhancing collaboration, engagement and workplace wellbeing.

We comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987. We are an equal opportunity employer committed to providing a safe working environment for all. We seek to reflect our diverse

communities and provide them with confidence that people from all backgrounds have fair access to work opportunities in the organisation.

The City is committed to creating a workplace culture where diversity and inclusion is valued; where employee differences are valued and seen as a positive point of difference and where managers have the capabilities to recruit and lead a diverse workforce.

We are investing in upskilling our people to recruit and retain diverse employees and develop a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Related strategies

- People Strategy 2019–21
- EEO, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

People with disability

In Australia, employment rates for people with disability are significantly lower than those without disability across all sectors:

- 53 per cent of people with disability were participating in the labour force in 2018, compared with 84 per cent of people without disability. This has remained unchanged for over 15 years.³⁸



Employment is important for everyone.

- People with disability are half as likely to be employed full-time (28 per cent) than people without disability (55 per cent).
- People with disability are more likely to be unemployed (10 per cent compared with 5 per cent for those without disability).³⁹

The Australian Human Rights Commission reports that people with disability have said that they experience barriers in accessing information about job opportunities and in the recruitment processes, reasonable adjustments to support them to meet their job requirements and in career development opportunities once in a job.⁴⁰

Carers

While many carers are unable to work full-time or at all because of the demands of their caring role, others do work, and struggle to maintain a satisfactory work/life balance.

The City's EEO diversity and inclusion plan recognises the important role of carers in our community and understands that providing ongoing personal care, support and assistance for someone with disability, long term or life-limiting illness, mental health condition, dementia or who is ageing, can impact all aspects of a person's life.⁴¹

We are committed to our obligations under the Carers Recognition Act 2010 through enabling workplace flexibility, training, updating policies and providing toolkits and accessible information.

People with mental health conditions

Through our Mentally Healthy Workplace Plan, the City aims to build an inclusive workplace culture and effective systems for promoting mental health in the workplace by taking action in three key areas:

- increasing awareness of mental health conditions and reducing stigma
- supporting employees with mental health conditions to return to or stay at work
- reducing risks to mental health in the workplace.

The City also provides training for staff and employees to support colleagues living with mental health conditions.



Group fitness at Sydney Park.

What we have done so far

- Completed a review with Australian Network on Disability to assess our recruitment systems and processes.
- Developed the Mentally Healthy Workplace Plan to reduce stigma and raise awareness about mental health in the workplace and support employees with mental health conditions to return to or stay at work.
- Established a peer support program to enable staff to readily access support and information around mental health conditions. The program utilises a network of trained ‘peers’ with lived or shared experiences and skills around mental health who can be approached by colleagues for advice.
- Continued to provide workplace flexibility to enhance employee wellbeing by helping employees manage the changing demands of work and personal life.
- Provided entry level employment and development opportunities to young people with disability.
- Developed the EEO, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan outlining key deliverables that address the City’s commitment to EEO principles and provide a roadmap for a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Hosted staff events on International Day of People with Disability to raise awareness, reduce stigma and discuss the various challenges people with disability face in the workplace.



Workplace flexibility helps people manage the changing demands of work and personal life.

Case study – Workplace Flexibility Policy

In December 2018, the City endorsed a revised Workplace Flexibility Policy. Together with new guidelines and tools the policy aims to enhance employee wellbeing by helping employees manage the changing demands of work and personal life.

Flexible work arrangements available to employees include:

- variation in hours, such as changes to start and finish times, transferring to a different shift
- job sharing or working part-time
- spread of hours, such as arrangements to work longer on some days in a given week, balanced by working less on the other days; or working a 19-day month
- working remotely, such as from home or another appropriate location
- carers leave, time off to help employees deal with caring responsibilities and family emergencies.

Testimony from employee with disability:

“As someone with a physical disability, part time work was more suitable and manageable for me but I’ve always been too scared to reveal that as I thought it would be where the conversation ended.”

“During the end of my interview, I was asked ‘Would you be open to job sharing and doing part time?’ and I immediately felt so relieved that this was even an option and I’ve embraced this flexibility ever since.

It’s really been great for me because the two days off allows me to recuperate and work on other projects. Even then I have flexibility to come in on different days that meets my weekly schedule. I feel really supported by people here at the City.”

What you told us

We asked what we can do to improve access to meaningful employment for people with disability, people with mental health conditions and or people with caring responsibilities. We also asked what the City could do to better support people in the workplace.

People we consulted made a number of comments and suggestions on the recruitment and retention of employees with disability.

Recruitment

- Provide flexible work arrangements and promote this to attract and retain people with disability, carers and people living with mental health conditions in the workplace.
- Train managers on inclusive and accessible recruitment practices.
- Make sure the application and hiring process is flexible and can accommodate various access requirements.
- Employ more people with disability in decision making roles.
- Set targets for employment of people with disability and create identified roles for people with disability, including entry level opportunities.
- Work with the disability employment services sector to recruit people with disability.

Retention

- Ensure employees with disability are adequately supported in the workplace through reasonable adjustments and other workplace supports.
- Continue to provide disability inclusion training to staff and managers to ensure a diverse workplace culture where employees with disability feel valued.
- Implement strategies to make employees feel safe disclosing their disability and encourage open conversations with their managers about how the City can best support them.
- Ensure accessible workplaces and transport to work is available.

What we will do next

18. Build the capacity of managers and employees to foster an inclusive workplace through training and induction programs.
19. Build the capacity of employees with disability as leaders through management and leadership development programs.
20. Increase employment and development opportunities for people with disability.
21. Create opportunities to engage employees with disability and allies of people with disability as advocates and champions of change.
22. Strengthen procurement practices to build relationships with Australian Disability Enterprises to improve employment outcomes for people with disability through our supply chain.



With the right supports people can experience the benefits of work.

Sydney Town Hall.



Direction 4: Equitable access to mainstream services

Context

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating the systems and processes required to access local government services and decision making processes.

Services in the local government context include: general customer service requests like paying rates, providing feedback and making complaints, finding out about City facilities and programs, and participating in council decision making processes.

Access to information is a powerful tool for participation and engagement of all people. In recent years, new information and communication technologies and an increase in availability of alternative formats have improved access to information for everyone.

It's important that people with disability are engaged and involved in decision making on other matters that are important to them. This also ensures a true diversity of views is reflected.

The Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021-2025 recognises the City of Sydney's responsibility to continually review and change the way we do business to ensure people with disability have equitable access to information and services and can have their say on matters that affect them.

Related strategies

- Our approach to engaging the community
- Digital and Print Accessibility Policy and Procedures

Digital and print accessibility

The City's Digital and Print Accessibility Policy and Procedures aim to provide equitable access to information and services for all by ensuring the content and functionality of the City's digital platforms and printed materials comply with accessibility standards.

The City continues to ensure that our Digital platforms are accessible for all in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 (WCAG 2.1), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The guidelines set an improved level of accessibility, to cater to the needs of a constantly evolving and increasingly dynamic web environment.

The policy and guidelines address print accessibility considerations such as fonts types and sizes, use of appropriate colour contrast, and use of headings in documents and alternative text to ensure printed documents and those published online are accessible.

Engaging people with disability

Residents, workers and visitors have an important role in public participation. The City's Community Engagement Strategy aims to give people a voice in decision-making that affects their lives. People with disability are important contributors and play an important role in providing advice in community matters, both as a community and as individuals with unique perspectives in their own right.

The City's Guidelines for Engaging people with disability assist staff to provide inclusive engagement opportunities.

What we've done so far

Over the last four years the City has continued to improve systems and processes to ensure greater access for people with disability. Highlights include:

- The City's upgraded website was launched in September 2020. Accessibility was considered at all stages of the project, from procurement through to design and build. Conformance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 (Level AA) was a primary focus and the site is built for accessibility. Screen-reader-only elements give additional context for people with low vision. The content has been edited to ensure easier readability for users.
- The City's Digital and Print Accessibility Policy and Procedures were updated in 2018/19 to ensure that City staff, suppliers and contracts comply with current standards and provide accessible information both digitally and in print.
- The Alternative Formats Framework was developed to assist City staff to understand when alternative, accessible formats of City documents are required to provide access to people with disability.
- Information about key access features and barriers of City facilities was collated and published on the City's website. This information ensures people with disability can access quality information to enable them to make informed decisions about participating in activities at our facilities.
- Guidelines for engaging people with disability were developed to assist staff to run inclusive and accessible engagement activities.



City of Sydney information sessions for communities in various formats.

- Continued consultation with the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel. The Panel provides advice to City staff that strategies, projects and programs to ensure the consideration of access and inclusion.
- Consulted directly with people with disability and peak disability organisations and advocacy groups in the development of the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines and Event Guidelines.

What you told us

We asked how people with disability, people with mental health conditions and carers about their experiences accessing our services and information (for example: contacting customer service, applying for a grant, finding information online).

We also asked what we can do to make our services and communications more accessible to everyone. Some of the ideas and issues people raised are listed below:

- Promote City services, events and programs more effectively to people with disability. People with disability are not finding out about our inclusive and accessible services, programs and events. This is because the information is not reaching them, or it doesn't include relevant and accurate information about access features.

- Provide more information and communications in alternative formats. In particular, captioning at events, and easy read information.
- There is a growing reliance on accessing information online which can exclude some people. It's important to maintain a range of communication channels for people with disability to engage with customer service including phone, face to face and online.
- Make sure frontline staff are available to assist people with disability to navigate information and complex processes.
- People with disability need to be engaged or employed in positions to help design and review services, programs, events and communications strategies to ensure that the needs of people with disability are considered.
- Further improvements to simplify the grants process can reduce complications and confusion experienced by people with disability and people with mental health conditions. Engage people with disability when reviewing grants system and processes to identify and remove systemic barriers in the grant application, contract execution, contract variation and grant acquittal processes.
- People aren't participating in Council and City decision making mainly because they're not aware of the opportunities and not sure how they can be involved. Some people with disability also require further support to participate in decision making.

What we will do next

23. Identify and implement strategies to inform people with disability about how they can be involved in Council decision making.
24. Actively engage people with disability in Council decision-making processes including through the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.
25. Strengthen the City of Sydney's practices in providing information and communication channels by implementing the Digital and Print Accessibility Procedures.
26. Investigate opportunities to further improve the customer service experience for people with disability.
27. Identify and implement effective marketing and communications strategies to attract more people with disability to participate in City events, programs and services.
28. In consultation with people with disability review the City of Sydney's grants processes and practices to identify and remove barriers to people with disability applying for grants.
29. Provide a range of accessible hardware and software to increase the accessibility of the City's public access computers.



City of Sydney customer service centres provide many services to the community.

Action

Direction 1: Positive attitudes and behaviours

Outcomes/objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Harmony and social cohesion		
City of Sydney employees are disability aware and confident and have access to specialist training and development opportunities to deliver inclusive built environments and ensure our communications and services are accessible and inclusive of people with disability. Employees have the skills to meet requirements under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and deliver services that consider inclusion, not just compliance.	1. Continue to implement a program of disability inclusion training for City of Sydney employees.	<p># and % of new employees have completed disability inclusion training.</p> <p># of employees completing relevant specialist training</p> <p>#/% of employees that reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity</p>
Positive community attitudes towards people with disability and mental health conditions are enhanced through City of Sydney programs that foster greater awareness, understanding and respect.	2. Continue to provide community programming aimed at fostering positive community attitudes towards people with disability, including people with less visible disabilities and people with mental health conditions.	<p># of programs delivered that aim to foster positive community attitudes towards people with disability, people with less visible disabilities and people with mental health conditions</p> <p>% of people who attended City of Sydney events who reported increased understanding and awareness of the importance of social inclusion</p>
	3. Increase the usage of images of people with disability across City publications, digital platforms and media channels.	#/% increase of digital and print materials produced that include representation of people with disability

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
Corporate Human Resources					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.2 Our city is a place where people are welcomed, included and connected.
City Greening and Leisure Creative City Social Programs and Services					●	
Strategy and Communications					●	

Action

Direction 2: Liveable communities

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Accessible places and spaces		
Streets, parks, footpaths and open spaces in the City of Sydney area are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of infrastructure and places enables people with disability to travel through the city with dignity and independence	4. Continue to improve the accessibility of streets, footpaths, parks and open places through renewal programs, upgrades and new capital projects in compliance with the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines.	# and % of non-compliant kerb ramps remediated # of new kerb ramps/continuous footpath treatments installed
	5. Improve access to information about City of Sydney facilities and open spaces to assist people with disability including people who are neurodivergent.	# of updates to the City's Access Map # of hits received on City's Access Map per annum Feedback on accuracy of map and access information on the City's website, where available
	6. Review the current provision of seating and provide additional rest opportunities on streets and in outdoor spaces, where appropriate.	# of additional seats and places to rest on streets and in outdoor spaces
	7. Advocate to other government agencies and land owners to provide additional Adult Change Facilities in the City of Sydney area.	# of Adult Change Facilities installed in the City of Sydney

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
City Access and Transport City Design City Greening & Leisure City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Social Programs and Services					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 4.1 The city and neighbouring areas have a network of accessible, safe, connected pedestrian and cycling paths integrated with green spaces.
City Greening & Leisure Social Programs and Services					●	
City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Social Programs and Services	●	●	●			
City Greening and Leisure Social Programs and Services					●	

Action

Direction 2: Liveable Communities

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Accessible places and spaces		
Streets, parks, footpaths and open spaces in the City of Sydney area are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of infrastructure and places enables people with disability to travel through the city with dignity and independence	4. Continue to improve the accessibility of streets, footpaths, parks and open places through renewal programs, upgrades and new capital projects in compliance with the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines.	# and % of non-compliant kerb ramps remediated # of new kerb ramps/continuous footpath treatments installed
	5. Improve access to information about City of Sydney facilities and open spaces to assist people with disability including people who are neurodivergent.	# of updates to the City's Access Map # of hits received on City's Access Map per annum Feedback on accuracy of map and access information on the City's website, where available
	6. Review the current provision of seating and provide additional rest opportunities on streets and in outdoor spaces, where appropriate.	# of additional seats and places to rest on streets and in outdoor spaces
	7. Advocate to other government agencies and land owners to provide additional Adult Change Facilities in the City of Sydney area.	# of Adult Change Facilities installed in the City of Sydney.

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
City Access and Transport City Design City Greening & Leisure City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Social Programs and Services					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 4.1 The city and neighbouring areas have a network of accessible, safe, connected pedestrian and cycling paths integrated with green spaces.
City Greening & Leisure Social Programs and Services					●	
City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Social Programs and Services	●	●	●			
City Greening and Leisure Social Programs and Services					●	

Action

Direction 2: Liveable Communities

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Accessible places and spaces		
Streets, parks, footpaths and open spaces in the City of Sydney area are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of infrastructure and places enables people with disability to travel through the city with dignity and independence	8. Explore opportunities to provide designated quiet spaces, places for sensory seeking and places for respite in City of Sydney facilities and in parks and playgrounds.	# of quiet space/sensory seeking places provided in existing or new City parks # of quiet spaces provided in City facilities
	9. Provide charging points for personal devices such as phones, electric bikes and mobility scooters in City of Sydney facilities.	# of charging points installed in community facilities
	10. Continue to explore and implement strategies to increase access to on-street and off-street accessible parking and drop-off points in the City of Sydney area.	Report on strategies utilised to increase access to on-street and off-street accessible parking and drop-off points in the City of Sydney # of spaces within 200m of key social infrastructure
Accessible City of Sydney community facilities and venues provide the foundation of inclusive participation.	11. Identify the most appropriate hearing augmentation systems to be used across the City of Sydney's facilities and venues, where appropriate.	#/% of City of Sydney community facilities and venues with appropriate hearing augmentation systems or plans to install

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
City Greening and Leisure City Projects and Properties Social Programs and Services		●	●	●		Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 4.1 The city and neighbouring areas have a network of accessible, safe, connected pedestrian and cycling paths integrated with green spaces.
Social Programs and Services	●					
City Access and Transport City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Social Programs and Services Strategic Planning and Urban Design	●	●	●			
City Projects and Properties	●	●	●	●		Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.4 There is equitable access to community facilities and places, parks and recreational facilities to support wellbeing in daily life.

Action

Direction 2: Liveable Communities

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Accessible places and spaces		
Businesses in the City of Sydney area are more accessible and inclusive to people with disability, parents with prams and older people, as well as their friends and families.	12. Collaborate with local businesses and disability-led organisations to build their capacity to be more inclusive and accessible.	# of programs and activities undertaken to build the capacity of City of Sydney businesses to be more inclusive and accessible
Diverse housing tenures and types		
More housing in the City of Sydney is accessible and adaptable. It will meet the needs of people with disability and support people to age in place.	13. Through the implementation of the City's Housing for All Strategy investigate opportunities in the planning controls to increase the amount and improve the standard of housing that is universally designed.	Report any changes made to planning controls to increase the amount and improve the standard of housing that is universally designed
Sense of belonging and connection to place		
Opportunities for inclusive participation are available at City of Sydney facilities, and people with disability can easily identify opportunities that meet their preferences and needs.	14. Continue to deliver a range of inclusive community, learning, sport and recreation programs and major events that ensure equitable access and participation for people with disability.	# of inclusive and accessible programs delivered
	15. Continue to provide programming that empowers people to manage their stressors and social and emotional wellbeing.	# of events/programs delivered to manage stressors and social and emotional wellbeing

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
City Business Grants and Sponsorships Night Time Economy		●	●			Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.3 Local economies are resilient, meet the needs of tehri community, and provide opportunities for people to realise their potential.
Strategic Planning and Urban Design		●				Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 8.1 The supply of market housing in the city meets the needs of a diverse and growing population.
Creative City Social Programs and Services					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.2 Our city is a place where people are welcomed, included and connected. 6.4 There is equitable access to community facilities and places, parks and recreational facilities to support wellbeing in daily life.
City Greening and Leisure Social Programs and Services					●	

Action

Direction 2: Liveable Communities

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Diverse thriving communities		
Major events in the City of Sydney area are accessible, inclusive and encourage greater participation of people with disability.	16. Deliver and facilitate major events in line with the City's Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines	# of Major Events that comply with the Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines
Vibrant creative life		
People with disability have equitable opportunities to participate in cultural life and events in the City.	17. Continue to promote participation of artists with disability and audience members with disability in arts programs through implementation of the Creative City Strategy.	# of artists with disability supported # of programs that supported audience members with disability

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
Creative City Strategy and Communications					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 1.5 The city enhances its global positions as a destination for people, business and investment.
Social Programs and Services City Projects and Property					●	Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 7.2 The City supports and encourages individual creative expression by ensuring opportunities for creative participation are visible, accessible and sustainable.

Action

Direction 3: Meaningful employment

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Inclusive growth opportunities		
Build organisational capability for disability inclusion.	18. Build the capacity of managers and employees to foster an inclusive workplace through training and induction programs.	<p>#/% of employees that reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity</p> <p>#/% of managers that have undertaken disability inclusion training</p> <p># of employees with disability surveyed that reported positive/negative experiences with senior leadership</p>
Invest in building the capabilities of people with disabilities, in our workforce.	19. Build the capacity of employees with disability as leaders through management and leadership development programs.	<p>#/% of employees with disability completed program</p> <p>#/% increase in employees with disability who are in leadership positions</p> <p>#/% of employees that reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity</p>
Attract and recruit people with disability into meaningful roles at the City of Sydney.	20. Increase employment and development opportunities for people with disability.	<p>% of employees with disability employed at the City</p> <p># of entry level internship, traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities offered per annum</p>

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On- going	
Corporate Human Resources	●	●				Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 1.2 The City economy is competitive, prosperous and inclusive.
Corporate Human Resources		●	●			
Corporate Human Resources	●	●				

Action

Direction 3: Meaningful Employment

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Build an inclusive workplace culture where employees with disability are valued and respected.	21. Create opportunities to engage employees with disability and allies of people with disability as advocates and champions of change.	<p>#/% of employees that reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity</p> <p>Median length of tenure of employees with disability compared to employees without disability</p>
The City of Sydney's procurement policies and practices improve employment outcomes for people with disability.	22. Strengthen procurement practices by building relationships with Australian Disability Enterprises and educating City of Sydney employees.	<p># of suppliers of Australian Disability Enterprises utilised</p> <p>\$ spent on Australian Disability Enterprises</p>

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
Corporate Human Resources	●	●	●			Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 1.2 The City economy is competitive, prosperous and inclusive.
Procurement	●	●				

Action

Direction 4: Equitable access to mainstream services

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Balanced and inclusive local decision making		
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	23. Identify and implement strategies to inform people with disability about how they can be involved in Council decision making.	Accessible guidelines are developed and published # of guidelines are distributed or downloaded
	24. Actively engage people with disability in Council decision-making processes including through the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.	# of initiatives, projects and/or strategies for which consultation was undertaken with the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel
Transparent accountable governance		
City information is accessible to all.	25. Strengthen the City of Sydney's practices in providing information and communication channels by implementing the Digital and Print Accessibility Procedures.	#/% of accessible print and digital materials produced
Public participation in community life		
City of Sydney customer service is accessible to people with disability.	26. Investigate opportunities to further improve the customer service experience for people with disability.	Report on diversity of communication channels available customers with disability

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
Office of the CEO Community Relations	●	●				Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 10.5 The community is engaged and active in shaping the future of the city.
Social Programs and Services					●	
Corporate Human Resources Strategy and Communications	●	●				Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 10.1 The City of Sydney is well governed.
Customer Service	●	●	●			Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.4 There is equitable access to community facilities and places, parks and recreational facilities to support wellbeing in daily life.

Action

Direction 4: Equitable access to mainstream services

Outcomes/ objectives	Actions: What we will do	Measures
Public Participation in Community Life		
People with disability are informed of inclusive and accessible City events, programs and services available to them.	27. Identify and implement effective marketing and communications strategies to attract more people with disability to participate in City events, programs and services.	#/% of people identifying as person with disability participating in City-delivered programming, services and events (as stated above this is always really hard to get - might need a new measure)
People with disability are able to access City of Sydney grants.	28. In consultation with people with disability review the City of Sydney's grants processes and practices to identify and remove barriers to people with disability applying for grants.	# of consultations # of barriers and solutions identified # of recommendations implemented # of barriers removed
New ICT Systems procured by the City are accessible.	29. Provide a range of accessible hardware and software to increase the accessibility of the City's public access computers.	# of accessible hardware and software installed

Responsibility	Timing					Integrated Planning and Reporting Reference Framework
	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	On-going	
Strategy and Communications	●	●	●			Sustainable Sydney 2030 Objective: 6.4 There is equitable access to community facilities and places, parks and recreational facilities to support wellbeing in daily life.
Grants and Sponsorship	●	●				
Creative City Social Programs and Services	●	●	●			

Implementation and governance

Implementation

The projects identified in this Action Plan have been prioritised according to the feedback from our consultations with people with disability, the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel and the resources and capacity of the City.

Indicative timeframes for the commencement of projects has been identified as part of the planning process. Commencement dates for projects will be confirmed annually as they are further developed and budgets and resources allocated for their delivery.

Governance

The implementation of Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021–2025 will be overseen by the executive sponsor responsible for driving a culture of inclusion across the organisation and an internal working group, comprised of staff from across a number of Council departments.

Relevant departments will be required to report on progress of implementing actions as part of their regular business reporting. This will inform the regular working group meetings, biannual status reports to the executive sponsor and annual progress reports.

Progress and outcomes will be reported annually as part of the City's Annual Report. A copy will be provided to the NSW Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services as required under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act, 2014.

Monitoring progress

We will regularly measure and report against the actions in this plan.

This plan is based on the findings of ongoing research and consultation. However, the environment in which we provide services is dynamic and the nature of projects and priorities may change. Identified projects may not be required and new opportunities and priorities may emerge.

Regular monitoring and annual progress reports will consider:

- the quality and success of implementation to date
- modification of strategies as required to achieve specific objectives of the plan.

Ongoing consultation

Ensuring participation of people with disability in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the plan is essential to making sure we are headed towards success.

The Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel will be consulted on the implementation, progress and evaluation of the plan. The annual progress report will be discussed with the panel.

Where appropriate and feasible to relevant actions in the plan, the City will also consult with other groups representing people with disability.

The annual report will be made publicly available online.

Measuring success

Overview

The actions set out in this plan have been devised to create a more inclusive and accessible city.

Inclusion of people with disability in the City of Sydney will be influenced by not only the actions set out in this action plan, but factors such as Australian economic and employment conditions, technological trends, and the attitudes and actions of individuals, business owners and community groups and service providers in the City of Sydney local government area.

The City has two distinct roles in measuring the success of the action plan:

- measuring the impact of our own actions
- monitoring outcomes for people with disability more generally.
- The action tables above include:
- outcomes: these are our desired objectives
- measures: that indicate how much or how well we have achieved the action.

Measuring impact

It is important that the City measures the impact of our actions and that we report on this progress to our community.

The City will prepare an annual progress report for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and the NSW Disability Council.

The report will use progress measures identified in the action tables.

This report is published on our website and staff also report on progress annually to the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.

Monitoring outcomes

It's important to monitor outcomes and broad trends in the community and use this information to review and influence future priorities and actions.

The City will monitor the impact of our actions against the longer term outcomes as part of the review process at the end of the four-year Inclusion (Disability) Action Planning cycle.

The below indicator framework outlines how the City will use relevant population level indicators to monitor outcomes at the end of the four-year timeframe.

Outcome Indicator Framework

Desired outcomes	Population Level Indicator	Indicator Source
Direction 1 – Positive community attitudes and behaviours		
Positive community attitudes towards people with disability and mental health conditions are enhanced through City of Sydney programs that foster greater awareness, understanding and respect.	% experiencing positive community attitudes every 4 years	Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan consultation 2025
Positive community attitudes towards people with disability and mental health conditions are promoted through the City's digital and print platforms.	% reporting feeling part of the community; trust; and appreciation of diversity	Community wellbeing indicators
Direction 2 – The creation of more liveable communities for people with disability		
Streets, parks, footpaths and open spaces in the City of Sydney area are accessible. The design, maintenance and management of infrastructure and places enables people with disability to travel through the city with dignity and independence.	% of people with disability that report that the City streets, parks, footpaths, open spaces and facilities are easy to access	Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan consultation 2025
	% of people with disability vs no disability reporting using public transport, private transport or active transport to work	Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2016
Accessible City of Sydney community facilities and venues provide the foundation of inclusive participation.	% of people with disability vs no disability reporting satisfied with the access to the City's recreational facilities, community halls/venues and community centres, and libraries	Community wellbeing indicators
Opportunities for inclusive participation are available at City of Sydney facilities, and people with disability can easily identify opportunities that meet their preferences and needs.	% of people with disability vs no disability participating in arts and related activities in the last month % of people with disability vs no disability attending sporting events or competitions, as a participant and spectator	Community wellbeing indicators

Desired outcomes	Population Level Indicator	Indicator Source
People with disability have equitable opportunities to participate in cultural life and events in the city.	<p>% of people with disability vs no disability reporting communication barriers limiting participation in cultural activities</p> <p>% of people with disability vs no disability reporting participation in cultural life</p>	Community wellbeing indicators
Direction 3 – Meaningful employment		
Attract and recruit people with disability into meaningful roles at the City of Sydney.	% of people with disability vs no disability being employed aged 15+ expressed as a percentage of people aged 15+ in the ABS “Inner Sydney” region	Community wellbeing indicators
	<p>% of people with disability vs no disability reporting living on low /high income</p> <p>% of people with disability vs no disability reporting high / low skill employment</p>	Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2016
Direction 4 – More equitable access to mainstream services through better systems and processes		
People with disability are informed, consulted and actively participate in Council decision-making processes.	<p>% of people with disability vs no disability reporting opportunities to have a say on issues that are important to them</p> <p>% of people with disability vs no disability participating in community engagement activities in the last 12 months</p>	Community wellbeing indicators
People with disability are informed of inclusive and accessible City events, programs and services available to them.	% of people with disability vs no disability reporting satisfied with the number and quality of cultural events (including festivals, musical, theatre, dance performances, exhibitions & other cultural offerings)	Community wellbeing indicators

Endnotes

1. City of Sydney, *Community wellbeing indicators 2019*, City of Sydney, 2019.
2. United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, UN General Assembly, 2006.
3. Department of Social Services (DSS), *Statement of continued commitment: National disability strategy 2010–2020*, Department of Social Services, Australian Government, 2020.
4. DSS, *Statement of continued commitment: National disability strategy 2010–2020*.
5. Department of Communities and Justice, *Statutory review of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, Department of Social Services, NSW Government, 2020.
6. National Disability Insurance Agency, *What is the NDIS?*, NDIS website, 2021.
7. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Table 1: Estimated resident population, local government areas, New South Wales* [data set], ABS website, 2019.
8. .id (informed decisions), *City of Sydney: Population summary*, .id website, 2019.
9. City of Sydney, *Floor and employment survey*, City of Sydney, 2017.
10. City of Sydney, *City of Sydney estimates* [unpublished internal data], City of Sydney, 2018.
11. Tourism Research Australia, *National visitor survey results (NVS) YE March 2020* [dataset], tra.gov.au, 2020; Tourism Research Australia, *International visitor survey results (IVS) YE March 2020* [dataset], Tourism Research Australia website, 2020.
12. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*, ABS website, 2019.
13. ABS, *Table 12.1 44300DO001_2018 Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: New South Wales* [data set], ABS website, 2020.
14. City of Sydney, *Community wellbeing indicators 2019*.
15. ABS, 2016 Census: *Counting persons, place of usual residence. Core activity need for assistance by State and LGA* [census tablebuilder], ABS website, 2020.
16. Mental Health Coordinating Council, *Recovery oriented language guide*, 2nd edn, Mental Health Coordinating Council, 2018.
17. ABS, *National health survey: First results*, ABS website, 2018.
18. City of Sydney, *Community wellbeing indicators 2019*; City of Sydney, *Community wellbeing indicators 2015*, City of Sydney, 2015.
19. J Singer, *What is Neurodiversity?*, neurodiversity2 website, n.d.
20. Disabled World, *What is: Neurodiversity, neurodivergent, neurotypical*, disable-world website, 2021.
21. Autism Spectrum Australia, *What is autism?*, Autism Spectrum website, 2021.
22. Autism Spectrum Australia, *About autism*, Autism Spectrum website, 2021.
23. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
24. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
25. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
26. ABS, *Sources of Data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with Disability, 2012–2016*, ABS website, 2019.

27. First Peoples Disability Network, *Ten priorities to address disability inequity*, First Peoples Disability Network website, 2019.
28. ABS, *Census of Population and Housing. Counting Persons, Place of Usual Residence*. City of Sydney percent estimate calculations exclude 'Not stated' cases 2016.
29. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
30. ABS, 2016 *Census: Counting persons, place of usual residence. Unpaid assistance to a person with a disability by State* [census tablebuilder], ABS website, 2020.
31. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
32. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*.
33. City of Sydney, *Community wellbeing indicators 2019*.
34. Tourism Research Australia, *National visitor survey results (NVS) YE March 2020* [dataset]; Tourism Research Australia, *International visitor survey results (IVS) YE March 2020* [dataset].
35. Destination NSW, *Travel to Sydney tourism region: Year ended September 2020*, NSW Government, 2020.
36. City of Sydney, *Floor and employment survey*.
37. City of Sydney, *Housing audit*, City of Sydney, 2020.
38. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*; ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2012*, ABS website, 2013.
39. ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2018*; ABS, *Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: Summary of findings 2012*.
40. Australian Human Rights Commission, *Willing to work: National inquiry into employment discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability*, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016.
41. City of Sydney, *EEO, diversity and inclusion action plan-: People strategy 2019–21* [unpublished internal strategy], City of Sydney, 2019.

